

Dance of the Bees



An amazing way to combine movement skills with science to explore the incredible world communication between bees.



The population of bees is in decline all over the world – which is seriously bad news for the environment, as these insects both pollinate around three quarters of the food we grow and act as indicators of our planet’s health. So use a well-known playground game to create and perform your own Dance of the Bees, as close to World Bee Day (May 20th) as possible!

Year Groups: P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7

Outcome: increased awareness and understanding of the science and ecological importance of bees, movement skills.

Instructions:

1. Lead a whole-class discussion on bees, their importance to the ecosystem and the threats posed to them.
2. Use the hall or the playground for a game of “Follow My Leader”. Play the game for around ten minutes, allowing several pupils opportunities to be “Leader”.
3. Explain that pupils are going to work in groups (about 10 per group), using the game as the basis for a Dance of the Bees. Tell them that each movement/gesture that a “leader” makes must have a specific meaning/purpose – and, as a whole class, agree some of these. Set the groups a time limit (about 20 minutes), stressing that they must all be able to remember all of the steps/movements/ gestures as they will perform their dances to each other (some groups may wish to make notes – so have paper and pencils to hand).
4. Offer floating support to groups as they plan and prepare their work.
5. Perform the dances, one by one. For each performance, set the audience an Active Challenge: to interpret what the “bees” are communicating to each other.

Follow-Up Suggestions:

1. Set the groups an additional challenge: to vary the pace and tempo of their dances to suit a particular piece of music (the opening of “Spring” from Vivaldi’s “Four Seasons” works particularly well).
2. Conduct some research into which native flowering plants attract bees. Plant some in a trough outside your classroom – and, in time, record what impacts they have on any bee visitors!

